

Norfolk Insider

City of Norfolk, NE

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“Political Sign Rules”

The Nebraska primary election is May 15, 2012. With lots of contested races, it is expected that signs advertising many different candidates will be put up all over Norfolk. There are city ordinances to comply with when posting these signs concerning placement and removal.

Although there isn't any ordinance regulating when the signs can go up, traditionally people do not put political signs up in Norfolk any earlier than thirty days before an election. This year signs won't go up until after April 15 which is 30 days before the primary.

Since signs can be placed in residential areas as well as non-residential areas, there are ordinances that pertain to each area.

According to Trenton Howard, Prevention Manager for the City of Norfolk, Class I temporary signs shall be allowed in all zoning districts. In residential areas, total sign area shall not exceed eight square feet in size. The maximum height of the sign shall not be more than six feet high. Also, the minimum front or side yard setback shall be five feet, so they aren't obtrusive to drivers or pedestrians using nearby streets and sidewalks.

“Signs should not be placed in such a way as to obstruct a person's view of oncoming traffic. It's a safety issue,” Howard said.

In non-residential areas of Norfolk, Class II temporary signs cannot exceed 32 square feet in size. Each zoning district in Norfolk has rules about setback and height of the sign. Generally, these rules have to do with the signs not being traffic hazards. No sign should block a driver's view of another oncoming vehicle, bicyclists or pedestrians.

There can be no signs in medians, on bridges, on traffic signals or attached to public street signs. They also can't be placed in public parks or any city owned property. A sign can't be put up on privately owned land without the owners' permission.

If a sign is placed in an unsafe or unauthorized area, city officials will attempt to contact the candidate or organization so they can remove it. If after that contact no action is taken, the sign will be removed. All political signs shall be removed within five days following the election. This year the signs will have to be taken down by May 20, 2012.

Removal of these signs in a reasonable amount of time prevents them from ending up as trash along the roadside or becoming windblown debris. Most of the political signs are not meant to withstand Nebraska weather and will rapidly deteriorate with extended exposure to the outside elements.

If you have questions or concerns about the placement of a political sign, please contact the City of Norfolk's Prevention Bureau at (402) 844-2060.